

REMARKS

In the aforementioned Office Action, the Examiner rejected the previously submitted claims under 35 U.S.C. 112 for the limitation "double fixed ended" added in previous amendment of the independent claims, asserting that this addition was new subject matter because the expression was not used in the originally filed specification. The expression has been removed in the claim amendments submitted herewith.

The Examiner also rejected each of the previously submitted claims under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Reast (US 5,507,516), or under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Reast in view of Cynamon et al. (US 2,485,434) or over Cynamon et al. in view of McGowen.

The Examiner made note that the functional recitations that formed significant portions of the previously submitted claims were not given patentable weight, and drew attention to the use of "means plus function" limitations to give weight to functional recitations.

Independent claim 1 and the claims dependent thereon have been cancelled, and independent claim 26 has been amended to adopt "means plus function" limitations.

More specifically, claim 26 has been amended to replace the previous description of the functional results of rigid and spaced mounting of the anti-roll device to the springs with means for performing the mounting, spacing and previously described functional results. Specifically, the claim now includes (emphasis added):

rigid mounting means at the opposed ends of anti-roll device for preventing any and all relative movement of the opposed ends of the anti-roll device to respective ones of the pair of opposed leaf springs and cooperating with the anti-roll device during spring deflection, when the springs deflect in different

directions to each other, to change the springs from pin-jointed characteristic beams toward fixed ended characteristic beams at the equivalent ends only when the springs deflect in different directions, as when the vehicle rolls, thus substantially increasing a stiffness of the springs during vehicle roll, the springs staying as pin-jointed characteristic beams when the springs deflect in the same direction, as during normal vehicle ride motions, thus retaining a normal softer stiffness of the springs when roll is not occurring; and

spacing means at the opposed ends of the anti-roll device for mounting the anti-roll device at a substantial offset distance from a neutral axis in bending of the springs and cooperating with the anti-roll device to resist the spring deflection when the springs deflect in opposite directions to produce resistance forces that combine with the offset distance from the neutral axis to create moments in the springs to further change spring bending characteristics from pin-jointed to fixed ended beam characteristics when the springs deflect in different, opposing directions during vehicle roll, thus further substantially increasing the stiffness of the springs only during vehicle roll.

The Examiner's attention is particularly drawn to the description of the rigid mounting means as being "for preventing any and all relative movement of the opposed ends of the anti-roll device to respective ones of the pair of opposed leaf springs", as supported in the originally filed specification at page 12, lines 16-21. It is maintained that, as presented in the remarks of the last response dated December 18, 2008, this level of rigidity in connection of an anti-roll device is previously unheard of in the field of vehicle suspension, and that the cited Reast reference accordingly includes flexibility in the connection between its anti-roll device and springs. Previously the Examiner asserted that rigid is a relative term, and that the previously

claimed limitation of “rigid mounts” was accordingly interpreted in its broadest sense and found to encompass the direction-specific rigidity of the Reast reference. However, it is respectfully submitted that the now-claimed “rigid mounting means....for preventing any and all relative movement” explicitly excludes Reast and all other known anti-roll system prior art, as they are all known to allow some relative motion between the springs and the ends of the anti-roll device fixed thereto.

Not only did the state of the art within the field of anti-roll devices contradict any now-asserted suggestion that it would have been obvious to modify Reast to have completely rigid mounts preventing any and all relative motion between each end of the anti-roll device and the respective spring, but incorporation of the U-bolt based connection of the stabilizer bar and leaf springs of Cynamon et al. into the anti-roll suspension of Reast as put forth in the Examiner’s obviousness objection to previously submitted claim 34 would still fail to provide the now-claimed “rigid mounting means....for preventing any an all relative movement”, as Cynamon et al. explicitly defines the connection as “resilient” (column 2, line 15).

Claims dependent on claim 26 have been amended for consistency with the language of the claim 26 amendments. Claim 26 has also been amended on the second line thereof to correct a typographical error.

In view of the amendment of the sole remaining independent claim to explicitly define the degree of rigidity in the mounting of the anti-roll device to the springs in a way that contradicts the prior art , and to use “means plus function” language adopted to give patentable weight to the functional mechanisms by which this complete rigidity and the spacing means between the spring and anti-roll device provide a unique and surprising level of spring stiffening during vehicle roll, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 26 and the claims dependent thereon

are patentably distinguished over the cited prior art and are accordingly in condition for allowance.

Further and more favorable consideration is requested.

Respectfully submitted  
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